

Coakley Landfill Superfund Site

BACKGROUND

- The Coakley Landfill Superfund Site is a 27-acre landfill in North Hampton, NH, which was capped and fenced by the Coakley Landfill Group (CLG) in 2001. Groundwater use restrictions (a NH “Groundwater Management Zone”) are in place covering the landfill and adjacent areas, including areas in Rye and Greenland. The CLG, a group of Potentially Responsible Parties (“PRPs”), includes the City of Portsmouth, the Towns of North Hampton, and Newington, and a number of private parties who contributed wastes to the site. The group is working cooperatively with EPA and the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) on addressing issues at the site.
- Recent concerns about per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination at Pease Air Force Base (Pease sent waste to Coakley) and other sites across the country and a rhabdomyosarcoma (RMS) cancer cluster in the seacoast area prompted the sampling of PFAS at the site. Other contaminants such as 1,4-dioxane, arsenic and manganese, are also present in groundwater at the site.

TALKING POINTS

- We take the public’s concerns very seriously and EPA continues to coordinate with NHDES and the CLG to test numerous private drinking water wells around the site for PFAS. Over 80 have been tested and none of the wells tested exceeded the EPA Public Health Advisory/NHDES Ambient Groundwater Quality Standard (70 parts per trillion (ppt)) (by even 50%). Routine monitoring continues and more investigations are in the works regarding groundwater and surface water from the site – but no data collected to date signal a cause for alarm.
- EPA will continue to regularly participate in Governor Sununu’s Legislative Commission to help coordinate communication with policy makers and community members who have concerns about the cancer cluster and potential environmental exposures and help inform them of the group’s investigation into these matters.
- EPA has been meeting frequently with Select Boards from various towns, holding both area-wide and neighborhood meetings, as well as attending the cancer cluster commission meetings in an effort to disseminate accurate information and allay concerns.
- While local press coverage has focused blame on the Coakley site for any PFAS related contamination in the area, there may well be other sources and we are cooperating with NHDES in their investigations as we work together to ensure that the state’s drinking water is safe.